FBIS DAILY REPORT

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

20 MAY 1986

Iran-Iraq War

Iran repelled three Iraqi counterattacks in the Mehran area 18-19 May and recaptured three Iranian townships recently captured by Iraq, according to IRNA reports, which also claimed that the Iraqis have sustained 1,000 casualties and lost 55 tanks in fighting in the region. The agency claimed that the Iraqis have been "forced" to withdraw north of Mehran and that Iran has the "upper hand" in the region although "fierce" fighting is continuing. A communique cited by IRNA reported that Iranian planes bombed Iraqi positions in the area twice on 20 May, causing heavy personnel and material losses. For Iraq's part, a communique broadcast by Voice of the Masses radio asserted that Iraq "widened" the area under its control in that area and captured seven more heights and plateaus during which the Iranians incurred "massive" losses.

In the northern Haj 'Umran area, the Iraqi communique reported that "hundreds" of Iranians were killed in an unsuccessful Iranian counterattack and that an Iranian F-4 was downed inside Iran after it attempted to penetrate Iraqi airspace. On the other hand, a communique carried by Tehran radio reported a "relatively heavy clash" in that area resulting in more than 200 Iraqi casualties.

An official Iraqi military spokesman, in a statement carried by INA, rebutted Iranian allegations that the train bombed by Iraqi planes 14 May was carrying passengers, and insisted instead that it was transporting soldiers, ammunition, and weapons.

Israel

Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad's declared opposition to terrorism is "verbal progress" but the test of "genuine progress" is in deeds not words, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres told the Knesset in a speech broadcast by Jerusalem radio. If Syria continues to host terrorism, the world may resort to economic and diplomatic countermeasures, Peres asserted, adding that there will be "no need to resort to weapons" as Syria faces economic difficulties and is "vulnerable" to measures which the international community may take against it. Peres also welcomed Al-Asad's recent statements on the Israeli-Syrian military situation, asserting that the Syrian leader's approach is "better than words aimed at igniting flames in the region." If Syria wants a peaceful future, Israel is prepared to negotiate with it without preconditions, he affirmed. As for the Syrian deployment in Lebanon, Peres said Israel does not want to threaten Syria but it will not let Syria pose an "aggressive threat." Israel will not send its soldiers to play any role in Lebanon, but it will go to great lengths to ensure that Lebanon does not become a launching pad for missiles or for terrorists trying to infiltrate into Israel.

On the Palestinian problem, Peres reaffirmed Israel's readiness to negotiate with Jordan or with a mutually-acceptable Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, adding that Israel is prepared to have the negotiations open with an "international accompaniment" playing an encouraging but not intrusive role. Before such talks, Israel is prepared to propose, albeit not to impose, "self-administration of daily life" in the occupied territories, as well as measures to promote economic development and contacts between the inhabitants of the territories and Jordan.

The Israeli leader also stressed the "urgent" need to improve relations with Egypt and thereby broaden the "circle of peace." The two countries should adopt measures that promote "confidence" and enter into "direct and intensive talks" to solve pending problems.

Meanwhile, Jerusalem radio noted the resumption of the Tabah talks in Herzliyya, citing an Israeli spokesman's view that "real progress" was made at the first meeting 19 May. In another development, the radio reported that Syria will shortly receive SS-23 missiles from the Soviet Union. *YEDI'OT AHARONOT* cited reports that Syria will receive 500 SS-23's, adding that Israeli sources think the supply of modern missiles and aircraft to Syria could constitute a "serious threat" to Israel.

Lebanon

The clandestine Radio Free Lebanon reported that seven people were killed in renewed clashes between Amal Movement and Palestinian gunmen in Beirut.

Libya

Tripoli radio reported that Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi received a "personal" message from Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, adding that Staff Major 'Abd al-Salam Ahmad Jallud will head a "high-level" delegation to Moscow in a "few days."

Jordan

In a statement released in Beirut, the Jordanian Communist Party disclosed that several party leaders and dozens of its members were "detained" 17 May in a government attempt to end a "legitimate protest movement" in the city of Irbid, where Yarmuk University is located, following the recent "massacres" at the university, according to Radio Monte Carlo.

"Palestinian sources" cited by the radio alleged that the government deported Fatah officer Salah al-Ta'mari 15 May to an undisclosed destination.

Qatar-Bahrain

In a statement to SPA, Saudi Information Minister 'Ali al-Sha'ir announced that the Qatari and Bahraini amirs have accepted the

principles proposed by Saudi Arabia for a plan to eliminate the causes behind the Fasht al-Dibal dispute.

Sudan

An official SPLA-SPLM spokesman denied recent government claims that its forces had recaptured Rumbek, and asserted that government troops there are besieged and confined to an area, according to the clandestine SPLA radio. The official further announced that SPLA forces downed a government helicopter 18 May as it was approaching the town carrying "vitally needed" supplies.

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Najibullah Addresses Border Guards Meeting

LD182136 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 17 May 86

[Excerpts] Comrade Najibullah, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee, at about 1500 today went to the education center of the DRA border forces and spoke with the soldiers, students, and officers. A BIA correspondent reports that the general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee took part in a meeting of the soldiers, students, and officers of some units and companies of the DRA Army, which was held at the headquarters of the border forces education center.

At the beginning of the meeting, Colonel Hashmatollah [name indistinct], the commander of the border educational brigade, welcomed the participation of Comrade Najibullah in the gathering of the Army heroes. In the course of his statement, on behalf of the others, he congratulated Comrade Najibullah on his election to the position of general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee. He also expressed the brigade's militant solidarity and readiness with their beloved party, the PDPA, and the decisions of the 18th PDPA Plenum. He then stated the sacrifices and heroism of the border forces staff in shielding the country's borders and defending the revolution and people, as well as in protecting our revolutionary homeland, Afghanistan.

The BIA correspondent adds that afterward Comrade Najibullah said: Men, non-commissioned officers, and heroic officers of the DRA Army, greetings to you heroic comrades, greetings to you courageous sons of our fathers and forefathers, greetings to you the true sons of the Afghan homeland. The enemies shamelessly and brazenly embark on propaganda, unleash a hue and cry, and beat hollow drums by saying that in Afghanistan the revolution is not protected by the sons of Afghanistan. The DRA Army does not exist, they say. Who then, are these men of steel with hands of steel? They are not only Afghans; they are heroic and self-sacrificing Afghans like their fathers and forefathers who, with unshakeable will and determination, are always ready in the battlefield and are ready to defend their homeland, whose name is revolutionary Afghanistan.

During his statement, Comrade Najibullah said: Under the leadership of the PDPA, 8 years ago, the strong will of all the people, and of you officers and men, brought the glorious April Revolution to victory. The bases of an old and decadent monarchical feudalist plundering order crumbled in order to raise the level of the material and moral life of all the Afghan people and the tribes and nationalities to live side by side in an atmosphere of equality and fraternity. Comrade Najibullah added: We are determined to create such an Afghanistan. If this is the revolution's aim, then it is your duty to defend, safeguard, and protect this revolution. This duty is entrusted to you, the Afghan sons, the courageous troops of the country.

In another part of his statement, he said: The party and our social organizations, as well as the Armed Forces are ready for any kind of duty, day and night, to defend their revolution with their combat and political ranks. These forces are not alone; with them are the broad masses of the Afghan people including workers, peasants, artisans, intellectuals, petit bourgeoisie, farmers, national traders, and investors. Finally, the party is with the people; the armed forces are with the people, and the people support their armed forces and the party.

On the international level, the people of Afghanistan are also not alone. They have friends, international friends, headed by the Soviet Union. These friends have, in the course of 65 years stood by the people of Afghanistan under the most difficult conditions. Now, also, you witness that they take part in your struggles shoulder to shoulder. We are proud of such friends. You are the sons of your courageous and appreciative fathers who never forgot the favors of others. As the sons of our fathers, we too will not forget the chivalry of the great Soviet people. It will be transferred from generation to generation as the (?pages) of the history of Afghan-Soviet friendship consolidate, and remain forever.

You are witnesses to the fact that we will be victorious because we are not alone. With great faith and confidence, like the sons of your courageous fathers and forefathers who precisely recognized your enemies and friends, be ready for the crushing of the counterrevolution. You should fight to the death to protect your country's borders, which means the protection of the freedom, independence, territorial integrity, and national sovereignty of your country. We totally believe that you courageous men, in protecting the name of the homeland, are ready for every kind of sacrifice, heroism, and courage. In particular, the staff of the border brigade, who will graduate after a few months here and be sent to border units to shield the country's borders, will be meeting the tribes who live along the border. They will meet those courageous tribes who, throughout history, have defended the country's borders with courage and sacrifice, and have defended the homeland and the revolution. When you join them a strong and invincible wall will be created which the enemy will never be able to penetrate. Such are our revolutionary, humanitarian, patriotic, faithful, and conscientious tasks.

PDRY's Al-Bayd Congratulates Najibullah on Election

LD180610 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0445 GMT 18 May 86

[Text] Kabul, May 17, BAKHTAR — A congratulatory message from 'Ali Salim al-Bayd, general secretary of the Yemen Socialist Party (People's Democratic Republic of Yemen), addressed to Comrade Najibullah on the occasion of his election as general secretary of the PDPA CC, has been received here.

In the message, 'Ali Salim al-Bayd, on behalf of the Central Committee of the Yemen Socialist Party, has congratulated Comrade Najibullah and wished him success in the struggle for the implementation of the lofty objectives of the April Revolution of 1978.

The message pointed out that the Yemen Socialist Party has close fraternal relations with the PDPA based on the unity of goals and common principles. The message has once again assured the unshakable solidarity of the PDRY with the struggle of the DRA against the conspiracy of the imperialist and reactionary forces which has been waged for the destruction of the gains of April Revolution and prevention of the progress of the people of Afghanistan.

Similarly, a series of congratulatory messages have been received from the Afghan diplomatic missions abroad and employees of the embassies in London, Paris, Ulan Bator, Party Committee of the PDPA in the USSR, the party activists and youth organizations of Afghanistan in Moscow, Afghan students in Leningrad, and members of the Afghan representation at the United Nations on the occasion.

Keshtmand Addresses New Economic Council

LD161724 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0500 GMT 16 May 86

[Text] Kabul, May 15, BAKHTAR: The first session of the economic Consultative Council after its new organisational structure was held here today with the participation of Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the DRA. Sayyed Ammanuddin Amin, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers and president of the Economic Consultative Council, presented a report on the new organisational structure of the Council.

Addressing the session, Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand said that the Central Committee of the PDPA and the Government of the DRA have devoted permanent attention to the questions relating to the socio-economic development. Successes have been achieved despite the desperate strivings made by the imperialist circles headed by the United States in collusion with the reaction of the region and the domestic counter-revolution hampering the ensuring of peace and democratic and progressive reforms.

According to the decisions of the Revolutionary Council of the DRA and the 16th Plenum of the PDPA CC changes were brought in the organisational structure of the council, said Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand. The gross national product, GNP, of the country in the last Afghan year ended March 20, 1986 has shown an increase of 1.5 billion afghanis as compared with the preceding year. GNP has risen by 6.2 percent as compared with the year 1978. The contribution of private sector industries is sufficiently high in the general level of production comprising 50 percent. There exist, Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand said, over 190 plants engaging in the production of chemical industries, building materials, machinery, metal work, pharmacy, paper-making, carpentry, light industries and foodstuffs.

The chairman of the Council of Ministers emphasized that the government will take steps for the formulation and approval of a new law on private investment. Under this law, necessary facilities will be introduced for the stimulation of private enterprises and the interests of the state and those of the private sector will be harmonized. The chairman of the Council of Ministers called upon the Economic Consultative Council to contribute in the formulation of the law.

Formulation of proposals on the development of domestic and foreign trade constitutes the main task of the council, said Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand. The interests of the state and those of the private sectors should be taken into account when the trade problems are tackled. The economic strength of the state should be consolidated.

The Economic Consultative Council as a member of National Fatherland Front should take a good share in the implementation of the economic policy of the party and state and should demonstrate of itself initiatives in the different sectors of the national economy, Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand concluded.

Further Details

LD181745 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 15 May 86

[Text] Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand, chairman of the Council of Ministers, today took part in the first session of the Economic Consultative Council held after forming its new organizational structure. The session was attended by members of the Economic Consultative Council. In addition, a number of ministers and deputy ministers of relevant ministries were also invited. The session began with the recitation of few verses from the Holy Koran. Sayyed Ammanuddin Amin, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers and chairman of the Economic Consultative Council, presented a report on the new organizational structure of this council and its tasks. The chairman of the Council of Ministers addressed the session and said:

While imperialist circles, headed by the United States in collusion with the reaction of the region and the internal counterrevolution, are striving with all their power to create obstacles in maintaining peace in the country and in the path of progressive and democratic reforms, the PDPA Central Committee and the Government of the DRA pay constant attention to the issues of economic and social development parallel to carrying out a successful struggle against the reactionary forces. In celebrating the 8th anniversary of the revolution, another eventful and difficult year has elapsed. The past year, as the year of jirgas, was recorded in the country's history as the year of the Loya Jirga, the High Jirga of the Tribes and the Jirga of the Border Tribes. The participants in these jirgas approved and fully supported our domestic and foreign policy.

In the past year, our country witnessed socioeconomic growth. As a result of measures by the PDPA Central Committee and the DRA Government in revitalizing and [words indistinct] growth of the national economy, despite the hostile activities of the counterrevolution, the gross national product of the country increased by 1.5 billion in 1364 [ended March 86] compared with 1363 and increased by 6.2 percent compared to 1357 [1978]. The national income rose by 5.5 percent compared with 1357. Now the PDPA Central Committee and the DRA Government have [words indistinct] all their efforts to expand the social bases of the Revolutionary Council and government. These efforts have been put forward in the 10 Theses and have received legal status in the Revolutionary Council statement. The expansion of the Revolutionary Council and of the Council of Ministers organization, the continuation of the democratic elections and the creation of new social organizations are all specific efforts that manifest the implementation of pledges made by the party and government to the people of Afghanistan.

Private sector industries, especially the handicraft industry, play a significant role in the development of the DRA economy. The share of private sector industry in the total production volume is

sufficiently high, comprising more than 50 percent. Its share in factory industries comprises nearly (?12 percent), and it accounts for a considerable share of the traditional national products such as carpet-weaving, leather goods, fur coats, pelts, and so on. According to 1364 preliminary figures, industrial goods worth 4.2 billion afghanis have been produced in private sector factories. According to the figures from the DRA Central Statistical Office, 190 private sector plants are engaging in the production of building materials, chemical industries, machinery, metallurgy, pharmacy, paper-making, carpentry, light industries, and foodstuffs.

These plants will help the people and the national economy to fully use domestic raw materials, reduce imports, attract able work forces, and also increase the export of goods produced and provide domestic markets with consumer goods.

The DRA will adopt a number of measures for the future growth of the private sector economy, for the normalization of enterprises' activities, and for the initiative of private investors. However, the work to attract private investment for the growth of the country's production capacities is being carried out weekly. A large number of establishments have been left inactive for various reasons.

The Economic Consultative Council should be involved in these specific matters. As a result of the government measures, the need for drafting a new law on private investment has been felt. In this law it is anticipated that necessary facilities should be provided for the activities of private enterprises, including an increase in production levels, provision for credit, and payment of custom taxes. Efforts should be made to harmonize state sector and private sector interests. The Economic Council should cooperate in implementing this policy.

Transport has an important role to play in the growth of the national economy. At present there are more than 27,000 transport vehicles in all to carry goods throughout the country, of which 8,700 vehicles belong to the state sector. Of some 4,700 goods transport vehicles, one fourth cooperate with the DRA Transport Ministry in carrying goods. Therefore, the duty of the Consultative Council, together with the DRA Ministry of Transport and other relevant ministries and local organs of state power and administration, is to assess the increased use of the private sector's existing goods transport vehicles in carrying state goods, especially to the provinces. This should be based on the mutual interest of the state and the owners of the private transport vehicles. The Economic Consultative Council should put forward specific proposals in this regard.

The great task of the Economic Consultative Council Committee is to put forward proposals on the immediate development of the country's domestic and foreign trade. The trade problems should be resolved in such a manner to correspond with the interests of both the state and the private sector and to consolidate the states' economic power. We should close attention to completing the system for providing consumers with goods at reasonable prices and create and complete an active system for controlling prices and trade. It is necessary that the complex of measures for enhancing the activity level of the peasantry units be put into practice. Agricultural goods production should improve in order to provide the residents of the cities with foodstuffs and provide industries with raw materials. Great significance is attached to the initiative and participation of individual peasants and national investors to increase agricultural production, establish trade units, and construct irrigation systems. Land and credit will be allocated to those firms and individuals who express a readiness to participate in the growth of agricultural production. Other necessary aid and cooperation will also be given to them.

According to the resolutions of the DRA Revolutionary Council and the 16th PDPA Plenum, necessary changes have occured in the organizational structure of the Economic Consultative Council in order to expand and enhance the level of its authority. Elected representatives of sections of trade, industry, construction, transport, agriculture, and handicraft industries that represent various sections of the economy and strata have been included in the organizational structure of the Economic Consultative Council. The activity of the Economic Consultative Council should be organized in such a manner that its role as a member of the National Fatherland Front will be put into practice according to the economic policy of the party and state and so that it will gain credit in various sections of the national economy.

The new stage of the April Revolution has provided the necessary conditions for speeding up the production forces and economy in Afghanistan in order to enhance the living standard of the working people. The successful realization of this important and historical task is possible with the cooperation and participation of all the country's nationalities, tribes, strata, and classes such as workers, peasants, national investors, and intellectuals as well as the progressive and patriotic forces. We must search for the methods and style of encouraging national investment in various sections of the national economy.

At the end of the session, two members of the Economic Consultative Council made speeches and expressed support for the policy of the party and the DRA and thanked the DRA Government for its assistance.

KYODO: Two Guerrilla Commanders Reportedly Killed

OW180947 Tokyo KYODO in English 0939 GMT 18 May 86

[Text] Islamabad, May 18 KYODO — Two leading Afghan guerrilla commanders of Paktia Province have been killed in an operation launched by Soviet-Afghan forces in the Jaji area last Wednesday, resistance sources in Peshawar said. They said Commander Shams al-Din and Abdul Hayee, two close aides of Prof Abdur Rasool Siyyaf of Islamic Unity of Afghan mujahideen, have died during three days of fighting in the area.

A large contingent of commandos was parachuted into the area by helicopter on Wednesday to clear the way for a ground force backed by tanks and artillery. Fierce fighting was reported in the area, with both sides suffering heavy casualties. There has been an exodus of population from villages in the Pakistan border area opposite Jaji, following continuous shelling and bombing of Teri Mangal village by Afghan ground and air forces during the past week. The Pakistan Air Force downed an Afghan fighter aircraft in the same area Saturday, about 15 kilometers from the Afghan border.

Jatiya Party Wins Absolute Majority

BK200349 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0110 GMT 20 May 86

[Text] The Jatiya Party has so far won 151 seats in the 300-member parliament. A (?latest) BSS message, quoting the Election Commission, says the Jatiya Party has won absolute majority with five seats yet to be announced. Another 30 women members will be elected by the members of the Sangsad [parliament].

The latest party position is Jatiya Party, 151; Awami League, 75; Jami'at-e Islami, 10; Communist Party of Bangladesh, 5; NAP-U [National Awami Party-United], 5; Muslim League, 4; JSD [Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal]-ROB, 4; BAKSAL [Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League], 3; JSD-Siraj, 3; Workers Party, 3; NAP-Muzaffar, 2; Independents, 30.

OBSERVER on British Criticism of Elections

BK171544 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 9 May 86 pp 1, 8

[Text] Lord Ennals and Mr Martin Brandon Bravo, two Members of British Parliament and Mr David John Leigh of BBC told a Press conference in Dhaka on Thursday that the parliamentary elections were clearly rigged to the highest degree. They went on to add that the results announced were not based on elections held on Wednesday. They maintained that the elections were neither free nor fair. They alleged that there were false voting and significant numbers of people could not vote because booths were closed to them.

The British team said there were absolutely no fairness and justice in the election and the result did not reflect the will of the people. Mr Brandon said that the malpractices adopted in the election were quite beyond any imagination.

Replying to a question, Lord Ennals said that he had seen the Presiding Officer at a polling station casting vote on behalf of the absent voters. He said "I will not give any credibility to the results." Mr Leigh said "whatever was the result nothing would invalidate what we say".

In a joint statement the team members said that by the afternoon on the day of election certain elements had clearly swung into action to frustrate free and fair elections. The polling agents of other parties were intimidated by the JP [Jatiya Party] supporters, they added. The normal election procedures which guarantee free choice were destroyed, they observed. They further said that the hopes of political parties that the election would be free and fair were cynically frustrated. They observed that what they saw during their visit to 35 polling stations the principal offenders in rigging the elections were the Jatiya Party.

The statement also said that since their arrival the team have been able to meet leading figures in Awami League, Jami'at-e Islami, Jatiya Samaitantrik Dal, Bangladesh National Party, and Bangladesh Khelafat Andolan. Jatiya Party leaders were not ready to meet them the statement added.

The statement read out at the Press conference by Ennals expressed surprise to note "unfriendly statement by the Government," about their visit. The statment said that Bangladesh High Commissioner in London had known in advance of their acceptance of invitation by the People's Commission for Free Elections and assured them that as individuals they would be welcome. Lord Ennals was chosen as member of the team because he is known to be a friend of Bangladesh. The members also issued separate comments on the experiences during their visits sometimes together and sometimes separately.

Replying to a question Lord Ennals said that in large number of polling stations strongman of a certain party arrived in jeeps and took over control of booths. They were wearing plough signs. Mr Brandon confirming this said that in the afternoon only members with 'plough' sign could be seen.

Mr Leigh told a questioner that he did not come across any Awami League supporter taking over polling station. He visited Rowzan in Chittagong, He added. They told newsmen replying question that they have not evidence any direct intervention by armed forces. But alleged that police did not take any action despite complaints by opposition of violence.

Border Violence Discussed With Indian Officials

BK191525 Dhaka Overseas Service in English 1230 GMT 19 May 86

[Text] A flag meeting between Bangladesh Rifles and Border Security Forces [BSF] of India was held on Saturday [17 May] in Tripura over the dispute arising out of the atrocities being committed by so-called Santi Bahini members in different areas of Khagrachari District of Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Bangladesh has told the meeting that the so-called Santi Bahini men under the (?help) and patronization of BSF are killing innocent Bangladeshis, setting fire to their homes, and destroying their propety indiscriminately since 27th of last month. Santi Bahini men have continued to create terror in different regions, particularly in [names indistinct] and Panachari border aras of Khagrachari District.

The Indian side denied the allegation of Bangladesh about any involvement of BSF with the Santi Bahini atrocities and requested Bangladesh to bring back Bangladeshi citizens who took shelter in India.

Bangladesh denied any influx of refugees into Indian territory. However, Bangladesh assured the Indian side that it was ready to accept any person after proper verification.

Ministry Spokesman Voices Distress Over Sri Lanka

BK191619 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 19 May 86

[Text] In a statement, a spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry has said that India is distressed and disturbed by reports that the Sri Lankan Armed Forces had commenced a large-scale military operation in Jaffna peninsula, including indiscriminate aerial bombing and strafing of Jaffna city. Such continued military operations will inevitably lead to the loss of still larger numbers of innocent civilian lives and only prolong agony and suffering of people of Sri Lanka.

The Indian Government has expressed its grave concern at the massive use of force by the Sri Lankan Government at a time when the Sri Lankan leaders have repeatedly confessed their commitment to seeking a peaceful political solution to the ethnic issue.

The spokesman said the Indian Government would like to reiterate its firm view that there can be no military solution to the ethnic issue.

CPI Session Denounces U.S. 'Threats of Aggression'

BK180343 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 18 May 86

[Text] The 3-day session of the National Council of the Communist Party of India began in Nagpur yesterday. In a resolution, the council denounced terrorism and threats of aggression by the United States against every country which refuses to follow the dictates of Washington. The party commended all actions by the government in support of Libya, Nicaragua, and all other countries who face U.S. aggression.

Opposition Figures Criticize Presidential Ordinance

BK170432 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 17 May 86

[Text] The president of the Bharatiya Janata Party, Mr L.K. Advani, has criticized the presidential ordinance by which the Center need not present to the Lok Sabha or the state assembly the reports of commissions of inquiry within 6 months. In a statement he said the ordinance is an assault on the authority of parliament.

The general secretary of the Lok Dal termed it as a negation of democracy and parliamentary procedures and misuse of ordinance-making provision.

Communist Parties Voice Criticism

BK171613 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 17 May 86

[Text] Both the communist parties of India — CPI and CPI-M — have criticized the presidential ordinance by which the Center need not present to the Lok Sabha or the state assembly the report of commissions of inquiry within 6 month.

A CPI spokesman in New Delhi described the ordinance as an attack on the rights of parliament.

In a statement the Communist Party of India-Marxist described it as uncalled for.

Congress-S has said that the ordinance is a violation of democratic procedure.

Talks With Gurkha Liberation Front Ruled Out

BK171255 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 17 May 86

[Text] The West Bengal chief minister, Mr Jyoti Basu, has ruled out the possibility of any dialogue with the Gurkha National Liberation Front [GNLF].

Talking to newsmen in Siliguri this morning, he said none of the demands of the GNLF were acceptable to the government. The chief minister denied that lack of devleopment had given rise to such a movement in the Darjeeling hill area.

SRI LANKA

Jayewardene Traces History of Terrorism

BK191251 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 19 May 86

[Text] President J.R. Jayewardene has said that terrorism in Sri Lanka is no longer confined to ethnic issues but an attempt to install a communist dictatorship and destroy the democratic form of government in the country.

Addressing a religious function in (Shilao) yesterday, the president said the people behind this move were planning a mass-scale bloodshed.

Mr Jayewardene said that, therefore, the government has been compelled to wipe out terrorism and appealed (?for) the support of the whole country.

The president also explained how the terrorism originated. During the British period the people in the Jaffna peninsula enjoyed greater educational facilities due to the large number of English schools. This enabled them to dominate the public and commercial sectors far in excess to their population ration.

As the situation was changed with the independence of the country and Sinhala becoming the official language in 1956, Mr Silvanagram and the Federal Party demanded a federal administration in the north.

Later, this demand was changed for a separate state and the terrorism in the north stems from that.

The president recalled how the UNP government after assuming power in 1977 implemented some of major demands of the Tamils in consultation with their leaders.

High Commissioner: No More Clarifications on Tamils

BK191202 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 19 May 86

[Text] Sri Lanka has made it clear to India that it was not in a position to offer any further clarifications to its latest formulations in the breaking of the impasse on the ethnic question unless the Tamils came to the negotiating table.

High Commissioner Bernard Tilakaratna called on the minister of state for personnel, P. Chidambaram, in New Delhi yesterday and discussed with him the Tamil problem and India's efforts in trying to solve it. Mr Chidambaram led an Indian Government delegation to Colombo a fortnight ago.

According to PTI, Mr Tilakaratna is understood to have conveyed Sri Lanka's view that unless Tamil groups came forward to discuss the latest formulations, there will be no purpose in providing amplifications and clarifications.

Mr Tilakaratna has also expressed the hope that there would be a positive response.

LTTE Group Plans To Use Army Against Rivals

BK181143 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 18 May 86

[Text] The security forces have uncovered an LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] plan to use the Army to eliminate some of their rival terrorist gangs. According to LANKA PUWATH, the LTTE had used some of its young members as decoys to divulge the alleged locations of the camps of some of the smaller groups to the armed forces. The LTTE's sinister motive is said to be the ultimate destruction of its rivals while launching a propaganda campaign against the government troops.

LANKA PUWATH said that the LTTE, which had terrorized the population in Jaffna and caused several deaths in the north, plans to use this card to counter the ill feeling against them in Jaffna.

Continuing Reportage on Clashes With Tamils

15 Killed Near Jaffna

BK171634 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 17 May 86

[Text] In Sri Lanka, at least 15 persons were killed and several injured in violent incidents in the Northern Province today. At (Pikkam), about 20 kilometers from Jaffna, 12 persons were killed in a crossfire between security forces and militants.

The Sri Lanka TV said the 12 dead were militants and the Army has recovered arms and ammunitions from their possession. Unconfirmed reports, however, say five Army men were killed in the incident. One person died in Kayts. In (Quailand) 15 kilometers from Jaffna peninsula, one Air Force helicopter strafed the area. A 70 year-old man died and three, including a woman, were injured when they were caught in a crossfire between the security forces and Tamil militants at (Randpalli) airport. A soldier died when a landmine hit a security force convoy at Yakachchi, 5 kilometers from Elephant Pass. Unconfirmed reports say eight soldiers were killed. Naval shelling is on since mid-day today in at least three coastal areas in the Jaffna peninsula.

Meanwhile, about 200 Tamil employees of Sri Lanka Radio and Television have been sent on indefinite special leave. The government said that this step has been taken for their own safety.

Troops Launch Offensive

BK181611 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 18 May 86

[Text] In Sri Lanka, heavy fighting has been going in the Jaffna peninsula as security forces launched an offensive to regain control in the peninsula through a three-pronged attack. At least 24 persons were killed, many of them reportedly civilians, since the joint Army, Navy and Air Force attacks started yesterday. The action is officially described as a route-clearing operation by a Defense Ministry spokesman. Our Colombo correspondent reports that the security forces have so far been confined to their camps in the peninsula. Information reaching Colombo from

Jaffna indicates that the forces have set up at least 3 camps at Vasavillan, Kankesanthurai and Karainagar. Jaffna town wore a deserted look with tension running high. Meanwhile, six persons described as militants were killed by men from the special task force in Batticaloa District yesterday. An official spokesman said arms and ammunition have also been recovered from them.

The high commissioner of Sri Lanka, Mr Bernard Tilakaratna, called on the minister of state for personnel, Mr P. Chidambaram, in New Delhi today. He discussed with the minister the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka and India's efforts to find a solution.

According to PTI, Mr Tilakaratna is understood to have conveyed his government's view that unless Tamil groups come forward to discuss the latest formulation, there would be no purpose in providing amplifications and clarifications.

40 Killed in Peninsula Operation

BK190448 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 19 May 86

[Text] In Sri Lanka, heavy fighting is continuing in almost all over the Jaffna peninsula between security forces and Tamil militants. At least 40 people were killed since the recent offensive was launched by troops on Saturday. Most of the victims are believed to be civilians. There are reports that troops are moving along the coast to cut the militant supply line.

In another front, the troops are also advancing toward the town of Jaffna. An Army spokesman said there was heavy fighting near the Jaffna air base when troops overran a school bus by the militants as an observation post. [sentence as heard]

Fighting was also reported in the town center, where three armored cars and a truck with about 25 soldiers are under seige by the militants. A 500-strong battalion has been sent to rescue the convoy.

Reports say throughout the night residents of Jaffna heard shell firing and small arms fire, indicating a fierce battle in most of the sectors of the town where the troops have ventured out of their camps. Life is at a standstill in Jaffna town with vehicles off the road and people remaining indoors. There is also acute scarcity of essential commodities, including kerosene and petrol [gasoline] in the region.

Meanwhile, about 1,200 people traveling to Jaffna have been stranded at Kilinochchi, as they are unable to proceed because of fighting. There is also no movement of civilian vehicles through the Elephant Pass for the last 4 days. All the bridges and culverts in the peninsula are being repaired to maintain motorable land routes over the Jaffna heartland.

The national security minister, Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, has denied reports that an offensive has been carried out in Jaffna peninsula. He told our Colombo correspondent, Piabon Majumder, this morning that the aim of the present operation is to make the military bases, Palaly Airport, and Karainagar Naval Base more secure.

Troops 'Clearing Roads'

BK191144 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 19 May 86

[Text] Government troops were contining their operations today to clear the main access routes to their bases in the Jaffna peninsula. The national security minister, Lalith Athulathmudali, explained that this was not an offensive but an operation to allow for fresh troops to be inducted. He said that all the security forces were trying to do was to clear the roads leading to the main bases and make the Armed Forces bases more secured.

Informed sources said that the forces are keeping to the main roads leading to the security bases in the peninsula. But the forces are meeting resistance from terrorists attacking with rocket propelled grenades and automatic weapons. The sources also said that at least 22 terrorists were killed in the fighting since the operation began on Saturday.

Six terrorists were killed in a raid on Saturday by government troops on a terrorist hideout at Palugamam in Batticaloa in eastern Sri Lanka. Security sources told LANKA PUWATH that the troops also recovere some weapons and explosives. There were no casualties among the troops.

'Indiscriminate' Air Force Bombing

BK191252 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 19 May 86

[Text] In Sri Lanka, Air Force planes bombed and helicopters strafed thickly populated civilian areas in and around Jaffna town as the operation of the security forces against Tamil militants continued for the 3d day today. At least 52 people have been killed and over 100 injured in the past 60 hours.

Two Air Force bombers dropped at least 25 bombs indiscriminately on the civilian establishments this afternoon destroying many buildings, while helicopters strafed randomly causing unarmed citizens to run for cover. Panicked residents were too shocked to give any estimate of the death toll in the latest bombing.

Jaffna 'Quiet'; 64 Reportedly Killed

BK200322 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 20 May 86

[Text] In Sri Lanka, after 3 days of intensive battle the Jaffna peninsula was generally quiet last night except for sporadic gunfire. Jaffna residents confirmed that unsigned leaflets were distributed at certain parts in the town suggesting that the offensive by the security forces will be kept up unless the so-called sentry posts manned by the militants are withdrawn within the next 24 hours. However, there is no official confirmation about any such move so far.

Panic-stricken residents benumbered with fear and shock after last evening's bombing in Jaffna stayed indoors with tension still

prevailing in the city. The full details of the damage due to yesterday's bombings are still not known.

Meanwhile, 14 policemen were injured in a land mine explosion at Kalkudah in Batticaloa district yesterday. Two of the injured are reported to be in a serious condition.

The last 3 days of battle has claimed 64 lives, although the official figure is 22.

Further on Jaffna Bombing

BK200914 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 20 May 86

[Text] In Sri Lanka three bombs were drooped over Jaffna town this morning from Air Force planes. Three planes circled over the town for a few minutes about 1030 before one of them dropped the bombs. Casualty or damages due to bombing is not yet known. Citizens had locked themselves in their houses or under safe cover to avoid injury. The town wore a deserted look and the silence was disrupted only by sporadic gunfire and bursting of occasional shells.

An official spokesmen of the joint operation command in Colombo said that the operation is not yet complete. He said thesecurity forces will strengthen their position in Kayts and Palaly areas and the security forces proceeding along the Elephant Pass had to get back to the camp. The operation in this sector has been abandoned because of attacks by militants. A group will be established at Kayts to provide stability to Karainagar, a naval base, and (?securings) of outer parameters of Palaly Airfield has commenced.

While answering questions, the spokesman gave the impression that either the operations were proceeding at a much slower pace or have been virtually called off. Written statements issued at the briefing gave sector details of the future course of action. The government also informed today six deaths in yesterday's air action in Jaffna town terming those killed as terrorists. It, however, did not rule out higher casualties.

Khamene'i Receives Air Force Commander Sediq

LD181333 Tehran IRNA in English 1320 GMT 18 May 86

[Text] Tehran, May 18, IRNA — Iran's president and head of the Supreme Defence Council, Hojjat-ol-Eslam 'Ali Khamene'i received Air Force Commander Colonel Hushang Sediq here Sunday.

At the meeting, Colonel Sediq briefed the president on successful operations carried out by the Air Force and its future programmes. He also announced readiness of the Air Forces to carry out any sensitive mission. President Khamene'i was also briefed on development of technical projects and pilot training schools.

Meanwhile, to support Iranian war efforts against the Iraqi Army, medical teams from throughout the country departed for the warfronts. A team, including surgeons and laboratory technicians, was despatched by health organization in Tabriz, East Azarbayjan Province, while relief workers from Red Crescent Society in Kohkiluyeh went to the battlefields after passing a two-month training course.

Foreign Minister Meets With Kuwaiti Charge, FRG Envoy

LD171151 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 17 May 86

[Text] This morning the Kuwaiti charge d'affaires met with Foreign Minister Velayati. He delivered a written message from the Amir of Kuwait in reply to President Khamene'i's message.

In a meeting between the FRG ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran and Mr Velayati, cooperation between the two countries and problems related to various projects that are in the process of being completed were examined. During the meeting, the FRG ambassador mentioned the invitation extended by the foreign minister of his country to the minister of foreign affairs of our country to visit the FRG.

In addition, Mr Velayati, in a message, expressed greetings and congratulations to the foreign minister of Norway on the occasion of Norway's national day, 17 May.

Message From Kuwaiti Amir

LD171635 Tehran IRNA in English 1610 GMT 17 May 86

[Text] Tehran, May 17, IRNA — Kuwaiti charge d'affaires to the Islamic Republic, Qasim Ma'rafi Saturday met with Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and submitted a written message from Kuwaiti amir, Shaykh al-Jabir al-Ahmad Al Sabah in reply to president 'Ali Khamene'i's letter.

Iran's charge d'affaires to Kuwait, Mohammad Reza Baqeri submitted a written message of President 'Ali Khamene'i addressed to the Kuwaiti amir to that country's foreign minister in late April. In his message, the president had requested that Iran and Kuwait take joint measures against barbaric U.S. aggression against Libya.

FRG Envoy on Mutual Cooperation

LD171154 Tehran IRNA in English 1142 GMT 17 May 86

[Text] Tehran, May 17, IRNA — Issues of Mutual cooperation were discussed in a meeting between Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and Ambassador of Federal Republic of Germany A. Fraetag here Saturday. The two sides also discussed problems of projects to be completed. Mutual cooperations between Iran and Germany include construction of road building machinery, and various fields of industry, and energy. The ambassador renewed the invitation of FRG Foreign Minister to Dr. Velayati to visit Germany.

Kuwaiti Paper Details Bahrain-Qatar Dispute

GF160755 Tehran International Service in Arabic 0700 GMT 16 May 86

[Text] The Kuwaiti paper *AL-WATAN* has reported that the installations attacked by Qatari aircraft last month during the clashes that took place between Qatar and Bahrain on Fasht al-Dibal island belonged to the GCC. *AL-WATAN* added that the installations — which were built by a Netherlands company — were a center for monitoring ships in the Persian Gulf in order to notify them of possible air attacks.

Citing diplomatic sources in London, *AL-WATAN* stated that in recent days Bahrain has reinforced its positions on the Hawar Islands and on the Bahrain coast, and cancelled all leave for military personnel. *AL-WATAN* stated that Qatar has also adopted a series of measures against Bahrain, including deporting Bahraini students to Bahrain and preventing Bahraini boats from fishing in the disputed areas.

Guards Corps' Rahman Leaves for Tripoli

LD191559 Tehran IRNA in English 1554 GMT 19 May 86

[Text] Tehran, May 19, IRNA — An Iranian politico-military delegation headed by Hojjat ol-Eslam Rahmani in charge of the Basij (Mobilization) unit of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps, left for Tripoli, Libya Monday at the invitation of the Libyan Government. Hoj. Rahmani is carrying a verbal message from President Khamene'i for Libyan leader Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

Accompanied by a group of Foreign Ministry officials the delegation is to meet with political and military officials of Libya and visit military training centers in that country.

Pakistani Paper on Recruiting U.S. Prisoners

GF191143 Lahore JANG in Urdu 14 May 86 p 1

[Text] London (*JANG* Foreign Desk) — Iran has begun to recruit dangerous prisoners during their terms of imprisonment in American jails. A report published locally indicates that supporters of the extremist regime in Iran have contacted disgruntled black prisoners in all of the big prisons in the United States. These agents also have direct contacts with Ayatollah Khomeyni.

According to this report the Shi'ites in the United States have established small communes in various cities in which released prisoners are accommodated. A similar commune has been established in Washington close to the White House. This commune is guarded by armed men. The report adds that the released prisoners swear allegiance to Ayatollah Khomeyni.

Kurdish Rebels Liberate Areas in Northern Iraq

GF180546 Tehran International Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 17 May 86

[Text] Iraqi Kurdish revolutionaries announced in a statement issued today that they have liberated an area of 500 square kilometers in northern Iraq and captured 800 Iraqi troops. The statement, sent to AP in Nicosia, stated that the attacks against the forces of Saddam's regime began last Wednesday in the Al-Kut District in northern Iraq and are still going on.

During the attacks they captured two tanks, three armored troop carriers, several anti-aircraft guns, and large quantities of the Saddamist enemy's munitions.

The statement added that the forces of the Iraqi Kurdish revolutionaries are posing a direct threat to Al-Kut city and the international highway linking Iraq and Turkey in northern Iraq.

New Battalions Depart For War Fronts

LD191148 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 19 May 86

[Excerpt] The Central News Unit reports from Sari that yesterday two fresh battalions, comprising the popular forces of Mazandaran, left for battlefronts from Martyr Raja'i garrison in Chalus. The battalions had just completed their training in such fields as relief courses, use of RPG's, and sniping.

Moreover, yesterday a group of holy warriors, specializing as first class drivers, relief workers, welders, boatmen, and other services, left for battlefronts to help Islamic combatants from Mazandaran.

More Reinforcements Leave

LD191833 Tehran IRNA in English 1743 GMT 19 May 86

[Text] Tehran, May 19, IRNA — Fresh combat and support troops from nine Iranian cities left for the Iraqi imposed war fronts as newspapers in the capital analysed Iraqi military strategy Monday [19 May]. Volunteer combatants marched under the glorious flag of Islam in the streets of their home towns before boarding buses for the battlefronts. Despite summer heat and the holy lunar month of Ramadan when Muslims fast from dawn to dusk, the stream of volunteers towards the war zone has been picking up.

In the northern city of Rasht, elite members of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps left the city barracks to join other caravans from neighbouring towns. Several volunteer units of auto mechanics, communications technicians, road construction engineers, and trucks drivers accompanied the caravans.

Other troops have reportedly set out for the battlefronts from such far-flung areas of the country as Rasht, Bushehr, Bandar-e 'Abbas, Mashhad, Kashan, Kerman, Yasuj, Tabriz, and Shiraz and their nearby villages.

Meanwhile newspapers in the capital discussed escalation of fighting in the war fronts and predicted an Iraqi defeat in the war. The Persian daily *RESALAT* [as received] said the new Iraqi military efforts are aimed at taking an initiative in the war and reducing pressure in areas where Iranian military presence is becoming unbearable to the Iraqi forces.

In an article titled "Al-Faw-to-Faqqeh the graveyard of Ba'thists" the paper brushed off the new Iraqi efforts as insignificant and said Iraq had adopted a similar strategy in 1982 when Iran was planning the Fath-al-Mobin offensive. The paper predicted that the Iraqi Army will soon lose its array in the Faqqeh region under the pressure of Iran's Islamic combatants.

Reportage on Combat Operations in War With Iraq

Iraqi Forces Repelled Near Mehran

LD190641 Tehran IRNA in English 0629 GMT 19 May 86

[Text] Ilam, Ilam Prov, May 19, IRNA — The Islamic Forces of Iran engaged in a heavy battle with the Iraqi forces in Mehran area, 75 kms southwest of Ilam, Sunday repelled the Iraqi forces from Eslamiyeh (Showhan) Township and the Rezaabad area, north of Mehran. The Islamic forces of Iran in this operation were backed by the Army Aviation service and with the help of the heavy artillery units made the enemy to retreat from the southern part of Mehran.

In the course of the fighting during the past two days a large number of Iraqis were killed or injured and 45 Iraqi tanks and armoured personnel carriers were destroyed.

Heavy fighting is reported to be continuing in Mehran taken by the Iraqi forces May 17 in a bid to offset the effect of the liberation of the Iraqi port city of Al-Faw by the Islamic forces of Iran and to make up for the humiliating defeats.

Air Raid on Mehran

LD190848 Tehran IRNA in English 0844 GMT 19 May 86

[Text] Tehran, May 19, IRNA — The Iranian Fighter-bombers in two successive raids Monday morning pounded the Iraqi forces' positions in Mehran area, 75 kms southwest of Ilam, western Iran, said a joint Staff statement issued here Monday morning.

The Iranian planes inflicted heavy losses and damage on enemy's armoured forces and troop concentration areas and returned safely to their bases, the statement added.

19 May Report on Operations

LD191705 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 19 May 86

[Text] According to the Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, at 0615, 0640, and at 1300 today, fighter-bombers of the Air Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran heavily bombed concentration points and armored forces positions of the Iraqi units in the Mehran operational sector and after inflicting heavy damage and casualties on the enemy returned safely to their bases.

On the basis of the same report, yesterday, the brave warriors of the Navy of the Islamic Republic of Iran intercepted and inspected five foreign merchant ships in Hormuz Strait, but did not see anything suspicious.

At 0300 today, a relatively heavy clash began in the 2519 heights region, in the northwestern sector, and our forces, who are in full control of these heights, opened intense artillery fire and inflicted heavy losses and damage on the Ba'thist enemy. Yesterday's Iraqi losses and casualties on the northwestern front were: full destruction of parts of their positions and fortifications, including 5 tanks, 4 heavy and light vehicles; 5 enemy ammunition depots were set ablaze and more than 220 enemy troops were either killed or wounded.

On the country's western front, it is reported that the exchange of fire was more intense in the Mehran operational sector and the clashes in this sector are continuing. Thanks to the artillery fire of the combatants of Islam yesterday, the aggressive enemy suffered the following damage and casualties: four of their ammunition depots were blown up and destroyed, about 10 of their heavy-weapons emplacements and observation posts and 1 truck were destroyed. During their patrol missions our forces also captured an enemy soldier.

Sporadic exchanges of fire between the combatants of Islam and the aggressive Iraqi Ba'thist forces continued on the southern front and was more intense in the operational sectors of Sharhani, Kushk, and the Majnun Islands. Yesterday, the enemy batteries continued pounding various districts of Abadan.

500 Iraqi Casualties in Mehran

LD191735 Tehran IRNA in English 1720 GMT 19 May 86

[Text] Tehran, May 19, IRNA — Muslim forces of Iran during two counter-assaults against Iraqi forces in Mehran Sunday killed or wounded over 270 Iraqi soldiers, bringing to 500, the Iraqi casualty toll in the region until Monday morning. Iranian Muslim combatants have so far liberated the townships of Rezaabad, Eslamiyeh, Showhan in the region.

Meanwhile, Iranian jet fighters bombed Iraqi positions in west and South Mehran twice early Monday inflicting substantial losses on them. Some 11 Iraqi tanks have been hit and demolished by helicopters of Iranian aviation service in Mehran.

Muslim forces also cleared Rezaabad hill in north Mehran of Iraqi armoured Unit Monday destroying six tanks and an undetermined amount of Iraqi military hardware.

An Iraqi Counter-offensive against Iranian positions in the Rezaabad hill was smashed and Iraqi forces sustained casualties and losses and eventually retreated. Iranian Muslim combatants hold the upper hand in the region where fierce fighting still continues.

Iraqi Casualties Reach 1,000

LD191825 Tehran IRNA in English 1820 GMT 19 May 86

[Text] Ahvaz, Khuzestan Prov., May 19, IRNA — Muslim combatants of Iran repelled a desparate Iraqi assault north of Mehran Monday killing and wounding at least 500 Iraqi soldiers and demolishing ten tanks as well as other military hardware.

The Iranian Muslim fighters forced the enemy to withdraw while inflicting heavy losses and damage on the defeated Iraqi army in the said region. Over the past three days, some 55 Iraqi tanks have been destroyed in Mehran operational region.

Earlier Iraqi casualty figures were put at 500 bringing total enemy dead or wounded in the region to 1,000.

'Successful Operation' in Mehran

LD201139 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 20 May 86

[Text] A Central News Unit correspondent has sent a report on this morning's operations of the forces of Islam in the Mehran operational sector, on the Iran-Iraq border, to which we draw your attention:

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. O combative ummah of Iran, since the early hours of this morning, while relying on the Almighty, the forces of monotheism attacked the heart of the positions and fortifications of the Zionist enemy in the Mehran sector, on the Iran-Iraq border. During a successful operation they crushed two armored and infantry battalions from the 59th Armored Brigade and 42d Infantry Brigade of the 17th Division of the Iraqi aggressor forces, destroying their personnel together with their equipment, which had been presented to them by the superpowers.

Also this morning, a tank and its crew, disgusted with the injustices of the Zionist regime of Iraq, surrendered to the forces of Islam and were welcomed by them.

Meanwhile, at 0630 hours today, brave Iranian Air Force pilots, with a number of their fighter-bombers, heavily bombed enemy positions, fortifications and communication lines in the Mehran border region inside Iraq, inflicting heavy losses and casualties. After the sortie, the brave pilots of the forces of monotheism returned safely to their bases.

According to another report from the Mehran operational sector, on the Iran-Iraq border, the fast-flying eagles of the Army

aviation, during a series of operations, from 0715 hours today attacked enemy positions, fortifications and armored equipment with missiles [mushak], destroying several tanks, personnel carriers, vehicles, and other equipment and killing or injuring dozens of the Ba'thist aggressors. The excessive traffic of enemy ambulances testified to the fact that fatal blows were dealt to the Zionist forces of IRAQ today.

At present, heavy exchanges of fire continue in the Mehran border region. While maintaining superiority of firepower, the forces of monotheism defend every inch of our Islamic homeland.

Fighter-Bombers Attack Iraqi Forces

LD200706 Tehran IRNA in English 0657 GMT 20 May 86

[Text] Tehran, May 20, IRNA — Iranian fighter-bombers hit Iraqi group concentration positions in Mehran opeational theater, on Iran-Iraq border, twice Tuesday morning. A joint staff communique released here said that the attacks were carried out at 05:20 (01:50 GMT) and 05:30 (02:00 GMT) respectively. The Iranian fighter-bombers, inflicting heavy casualties and damage on the Iraqi Ba'thist forces returned safely to their bases, the communique added.

Iraqi Positions Strafed

GF200733 Tehran International Service in Arabic 0700 GMT 20 May 86

[Text] Our Air Force fighters twice strafed the positions of the Ba'thist-Iraqi-Zionist forces in the Mehran operations region early today. This was reported by the Army's joint communique. The communique added that after our fighters shelled the positions of the aggressors and inflicted serious losses and damage on them, they all returned safely to their bases.